

## R381-40-16. FOOD AND NUTRITION.

This section of rules gives information about how to keep food and the serving of food clean, safe, and developmentally appropriate for children in care.

One of the basic responsibilities of every parent/guardian and caregiver/teacher is to provide nourishing food daily that is clean, safe, and developmentally appropriate for children. Food is essential in any early care and education setting to keep children free from hunger. Children also need freely available, clean drinking water. Feeding should occur in a relaxed and pleasant environment that fosters healthy digestion and positive social behavior. Food provides energy and nutrients needed by children during the critical period of their growth and development. CFOC 4th ed.

Introduction 4.1 p.p. 161.

- (1) The provider shall ensure that each child is offered a snack when services are provided for three or more hours.**

### **Rationale/Explanation**

Children younger than 6 years need to be offered food every 2 to 3 hours. Appetite and interest in food varies from one meal or snack to the next. Appropriate timing of meals and snacks prevents children from snacking throughout the day and ensures that children maintain healthy appetites during mealtimes. Snacks should be nutritious, as they often are a significant part of a child's daily intake. CFOC 4th ed. Standard 4.2.0.5 p.p.166.

### **Compliance Guidelines**

- The time is measured starting from when the child arrives in care and ends when the child is signed out of the facility.

### **Risk Level**

Moderate

### **Corrective Action for 1st Instance**

Citation Warning

- (2) The provider shall ensure that the person who serves snacks to children:**
  - (a) is aware of the children in their assigned group who have food allergies or sensitivities;**
  - and**
  - (b) ensures that the children are not served the snack to which they are allergic or sensitive.**

## Rationale/Explanation

Food allergy is a growing public health concern. Nearly 6 million or 8% of children have food allergies with young children affected most. Research suggests that close to half of fatal food allergy reactions are triggered by food consumed outside the home. For more information, refer to Food Allergy Research and Education at [www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org).

A child's diet may be modified because of food sensitivity, a food allergy, or many other reasons. Food sensitivity includes a range of conditions in which a child exhibits an adverse reaction to a food that, in some instances, can be life-threatening. Modification of a child's diet may also be related to a food allergy, an inability to digest or to tolerate certain foods, a need for extra calories, a need for special positioning while eating, diabetes and the need to match food with insulin, food idiosyncrasies, and other identified feeding issues, including celiac disease, phenylketonuria, diabetes, and severe food allergy (anaphylaxis). In some cases, a child may become ill if he/she is unable to eat, so missing a meal could have a negative consequence, especially for children with diabetes. CFOC 4th ed. Standard 4.2.0.8 p.p. 168-169;

## Compliance Guidelines

Refer to the following definitions as they apply to this rule:

- A food allergy is an immune system reaction that affects numerous organs in the body and occurs soon after eating a certain food.
- A food sensitivity or intolerance is generally a less serious condition that does not involve the immune system and is often limited to digestive problems.
- A child's dislike of a particular food without a negative physical reaction is a food preference, not a food sensitivity or allergy.

## Risk Level

High

### Corrective Action for 1st Instance

Citation and CMP Warning when:

A child is served a food that they are allergic or sensitive to.

## Risk Level

Moderate

### Corrective Action for 1st Instance

Citation Warning when:

A person who serves food at the facility does not know which children have a food allergy or sensitivity.

**(3) The provider shall ensure that food and drink brought in by parents for their child's use is:**

- (a) labeled with the child's name;
- (b) refrigerated if needed; and
- (c) consumed only by that child.

### Rationale/Explanation

Restricting food sent to the facility to be consumed by the individual child reduces the risk of food poisoning from unknown procedures used in home preparation, storage, and transport. Food brought from home should be nourishing, clean, and safe for an individual child. In this way, other children should not be exposed to unknown risk. Inadvertent sharing of food is a common occurrence in early care and education. The facility has an obligation to ensure that any food offered to children at the facility or shared with other children is wholesome and safe as well as complying with the food and nutrition guidelines for meals and snacks that the early care and education program should observe. The facility, in collaboration with parents/guardians and the food service staff/nutritionist/registered dietitian, should establish a policy on foods brought from home for celebrating a child's birthday or any similar festive occasion. CFOC 4th ed. Standard 4.6.0.1 p.p. 193-194.

### Compliance Guidelines

- The food and drink may be labeled with only the child's first name unless another child in the facility has that same first name. In this case, the food and drink must be labeled with the child's first name and last name initial unless another child has the same first name and last initial. If this is the case, the food and drink must be labeled with the child's full name.
- Instead of being refrigerated, the food and drink may be kept in a lunch container with a cold pack, as long as the cold pack stays at least cool to the touch.
- Food that is brought from home may be put in a cubby that is labeled with the child's first name as long as the food is kept cold as necessary.
- It is the provider's responsibility to determine by policy if on special occasions parents may bring food to share with children other than their own. If allowed, only commercially prepared and packaged foods may be shared since the provider usually does not know how parents prepare and store food.

### Risk Level

Low

### Corrective Action for 1st Instance

Warning